



Postal Chatter

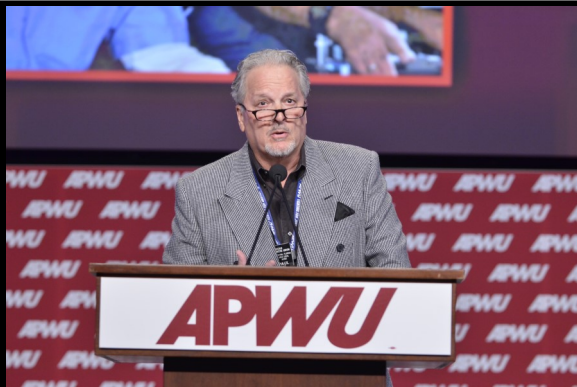
Proud Member of the Postal Press Association



Volume 61, Issue 1

Orlando, Florida

July 2020



From the Office of the President July 2020

As you can imagine, as a large local, we stay busy with an array of issues daily. Our membership is close to 1,100 members strong, and one of only 3 locals in Florida with over 1,000 members. Our local spans three P&DCs and 102 Associate Offices, Stations, and Branches. I want to thank each of you for being a member of the American Postal Workers Union and our Central Florida Area Local family.

In one of my previous articles I mentioned that we were awaiting the Arbitrator's decision on our Collective Bargaining Agreement, and on March 10, 2020, we finally received the decision! Looking over this decision and the 'new' contract, there do not appear to be a lot of contractual changes regarding many of the Craft Articles; specifically the Clerk Craft (Article 37), Maintenance Craft (Article 38) and the Motor Vehicle Craft (Article 39).

We will continue to face the additional issues within the **Clerk Craft** head on, including, but not limited to: (i) continuously working to convert Postal Support Employees (PSEs) to career positions, (ii) tirelessly striving for conversions of Part-Time Flexible Employees (PTFs) to full-time, (iii) preventing management and other crafts from performing our work, (iv) fighting discipline, and of course an array of other concerns. As of today, I have not heard anything concerning the USPS's attempt to implement the Function 1 Scheduler, and we are not certain if that is still something the USPS intends to bring back again. We have had over 275 Postal Support Employees (PSE) and Part-Time Flexibles (PTF) converted to career/full-time over the last 2 plus years in the Clerk and Motor Vehicles Crafts (the Maintenance Craft does not have PSE's). We are always working to secure additional conversions, and we will not give up on that endeavor.

In the **Maintenance Craft** we have stayed on top of anything affecting our Staffing Packages within our many Occupational Groups, and will continue to do so. It seems that every so often management is attempting to move jobs around between Tours and aiming to reduce our Maintenance staffing. Of course, this is going on in most Plants around the country, but locally we are only concerned with what is going on in our Plants and Associate Offices, and how these types of issues affect the employees that we represent. What you have seen within the past 2-3 weeks in the Orlando Plant is that the USPS is dismantling 6 (possibly 7) DBCS machines, 1 AFCS 200, and 1 AFCS 200 Legacy machine. In the Seminole P&DC the USPS is intending to remove the 2 FSS machines as well. We have already met with both Plant Managers and their staff, and as of 6 days ago, they are receiving orders from the USPS Headquarters level to reduce these pieces of machinery, and had no definitive answers to the many questions we posed.

Continued on Page 3

Postal Chatter

Published by the:
Central Florida Area Local
10501 South Orange Ave, Suite 117, Orlando, Florida 32824
Member Supported

Officers for 2019-2021

President - Joe Paul
jpaulapwu@gmail.com

Vice President - Robert "Bob" McSorley
cfalvp@gmail.com

Secretary Treasurer - Peter Fournier

Maintenance Craft Director - Ben Love
Assistant Maint. Craft Dir. - Larry Sexton

Clerk Craft Director - Wanda Wroten
Assistant Clerk Craft Dir. - Victor Sanchez

Motor Vehicle Craft Director - Gilbert Vega
Assistant MVS Craft Director - Jose Caban

Director of Safety & Health - Horace Nelson

Trustees are Roseanna Conlin, Frank Menz, Denise Larson-
Fischer

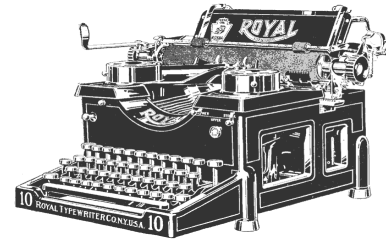
Contact Numbers

Union Hall: 407-854-6396

Fax Machine: 407-854-6399

CFAL Website

CFAL1462.org



Message from the Editor...

Any members who would like to contribute articles for possible inclusion in the next issue of the Chatter are encouraged to do so. To submit your article via email please contact the Editor at bloveapwu@gmail.com. If you prefer to submit it in writing you can mail them to the Local Union Office.

All submissions will be reviewed and may be edited before inclusion in the Chatter. Please ensure that you include your full name with your submission so that we can credit the author. Anonymous submissions will not be printed for legal reasons.



Ben Love

Editor
bloveapwu@gmail.com

The Postal Chatter is the official publication of the Central Florida Area Local. The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the CFAL, it's officers or it members. It is the policy of the Local to promote the "Freedom of Speech" but it reserves the right to refuse to print any article deemed improper, libelous or unfit for publication. The CFAL also reserves the right to edit any article submitted to fit the format of the letter. All persons wishing to submit an article for print in the Chatter may do so by send the article to the Union Hall, attention CFAL Chatter. All members are welcome and encouraged to submit articles, opinions or other news items of interest. The Chatter will not print birthdays, marriage, death, or other personal notices unless submitted by the party do to legal reasons. The Chatter is subject to errors such as spelling, grammatical or other

The APWU at the national level, only within the last 10-14 days, received notice from the USPS Headquarters of their intentions to remove machinery throughout the country. That is being challenged at the national level as it affects all crafts.

The **Motor Vehicle Craft** (MVS/PVS) and the **Vehicle Maintenance Facilities** (VMF) are not without their issues I can assure you, and we are challenging quite a bit in these crafts as well. The Article 32 sub-contracting issue is one of the prominent concerns, as we believe that our people can do the work in VMF rather than sending/contracting it out to other companies. In the MVS craft we are constantly filing grievances on the USPS breaking up specific runs, and we have been quite successful in the grievance/arbitration procedure, yet the Postal Service continues to violate this portion of the contract.

With the USPS reducing the machinery, it has the potential to harm every one of our crafts. The potential is there to reduce Clerk Craft jobs with less machines in the Plants, Maintenance Craft jobs with fewer machine to work on, and the Motor Vehicle Service Craft which could result in fewer truck runs. Our work is cut out for us and we will continue to do everything we can to protect all the employees under our umbrella of representation.

Now to another subject, the COVID-19 pandemic: Obviously, the Coronavirus is one of the most pressing issues, if not the most important for many of you and your families currently. As you know if you are a member of our local, I have been sending out many e-mails to all of you, often times 3-4 days per week, regarding what is going on in the Suncoast District with the COVID-19 pandemic. As you also know, the number of positive cases has been on the increase throughout Florida, and you can imagine, the same goes for our Suncoast District. Within our own Central Florida Area Local we are at 49 positive cases thus far. Remember to practice Social Distancing and follow the guidelines that we all see and hear every day, as we are all concerned for each other's safety.

****Retroactive payments for the pay increases under the 2018-2021 Collective Bargaining Agreement have been scheduled for pay period 18-2020, paycheck dated September 4, 2020 – barring any issues or unanticipated systems changes. All employees started receiving pay at the current rates in pay period 09-2020, effective April 11, 2020. Retroactive payments for the National Agreement will cover the period from November 24, 2018 through April 10, 2020. Workers who transferred, separated, quit, retired, deceased, etc. will be compensated for any time worked when higher rates were due as well. The higher rates will be reflected in adjustments to Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), Retirement, Terminal Leave payments, and Life Insurance. Retirees will eventually get all necessary adjustments to annuity payments – including retroactive annuity adjustments.**

Remember, it is crucial that everyone is a member of the APWU, so please make a point this week to let a non-member know just how much they are needed to help keep our organization strong and vibrant. This is even more evident as we are going through this COVID-19 pandemic. With the unemployment rate hovering around 20% or more nationwide, we have not been laid off and are still working and receiving a paycheck. **We** are facing battles at every corner and need the involvement of everyone. Organizing our workplace is one of the most important goals of the APWU. We are under relentless attacks at every juncture and we need everyone to assist in the battle for our futures!

In Solidarity,



President



The New Normal

By: Robert "Bob" McSorley

Our Lives have been forever changed. A pandemic that I, nor most of us never thought was possible. How could it be? How could this happen? The answers to these questions are unknown to me. It is probably the unknown of what the future brings is the toughest thing to understand.

There have been 2,500,000 cases of the virus in the US with those numbers increasing as each day passes, and there have been 126,000 deaths as of this writing. Florida has seen a rise in cases in recent weeks, and there seems to be no end in sight. Looking at these statistics can make it difficult to navigate such obstacles. It is normal to feel stress and anxiety during these most difficult times, and you are not alone. My children ask me questions such as: how long do we have to stay in the house, how long do we have to wear masks, and what is school going to be like in the next upcoming school year. They miss their school, friends, and teachers. For little people, early in their lives, this must be a very confusing time for them. I try to spend a lot of time talking to them about what they are feeling, and tell them that it is normal to feel nervous and stressed about the predicament that we are in. I tell them that their feelings of isolation are shared by so many people around the world and that it is okay to feel that way, and that they are not alone. The one big thing that I assured them was, that we as Americans will overcome this as we have done so many times before.

President Paul and I have visited many offices in the past weeks and talked to many members about the new normal. We listened to different concerns and suggestions voiced from our members. We brought their concerns and suggestions to management, and some were implemented, and some went in one ear and out another. Most of all, President Paul and I were (a) encouraged by the participation of our Central Florida Area Local members, (b) the process that our members took by getting prepared for an environment that minimizes exposure to themselves, customers, and their fellow employees. The input we received was invaluable.

In closing, I want to send out my appreciation for the dedication to the job by US Postal employees. You are the frontline workers, and if it were not for you and your fellow workers, this country would fall apart. Postal Workers have always been there through many national tragedies, and due to your dedication and hard work, you always seem to pull us out of the other side, and for that I say thank you.

In Solidarity,

Robert 'Bob' McSorley





Loose Screws

By: Ben Love, Maintenance Craft Director

The Novel Coronavirus, officially known as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2, and the disease it causes, which is better known as COVID-19, has drastically affected almost every facet of our lives. At the top of that list for many of us is our workplace. In this regard, the United States Postal Service Employees are no different than any other employees out there. We are seeing serious repercussions from all the businesses being closed down and the overall lack of mailing while everyone stays home. Some might be quick to respond that our package services have gone up, and they'd be right. Unfortunately, this does not change the fact that our letters and flats have dropped off severely.

Because of this drop off in mail, the Postal Service has decided to remove a large number of mail processing machines across the country. According to the latest information provided, they are looking at tarping or removing altogether 671 machines. Our own local stands to lose ten (10) possibly eleven (11) machines which include both FSS machines at the Seminole P&DC, and 6-7 DBCS machines, 1 AFCS 200, and 1 AFCS Legacy machine at the Orlando P&DC.

For those who don't know, "tarping" is a maintenance term which means disconnecting the machine from the network and locking it out so that it is unable to be used by operations. It is possible that some of the tarped machines will be used again in the future if the mail volume was to pick up enough to call for it. Although it is just as likely that they will be removed once and for all if we do not see enough of a mail increase to justify their use. The truth is that no one really knows at this point.

Removing any machines from our facilities will have a negative impact on staffing. You may have heard this already on the floor but please don't put too much stock in what people are saying. There have been no decisions made yet on any changes in staffing and when they are being made, your Local Union will work with Management to minimize any impact on our members to the extent possible.

Remember, these decisions to remove machines are being made at the National level. No one in your facility actually wants to remove them and no one wants to lose any employees. For that reason, please continue to complete your work assignments and fill out work orders for any jobs you do that involve a tool or a part. The work orders you submit have the potential to save positions because part of our staffing depends on accounting for these hours.

As always, stay tuned to Joe Paul's video updates and monitor your email because as soon as we get any confirmed information we will send it out. I know these are troubling times, but we will get through them together. Thank you all for supporting the Central Florida Area Local .

In Solidarity,

Benjamin Love

Director, Maintenance Craft



Carlos Paz, Terry B. Martinez, John Gearhard, Ben Love



DOLLARS and SENSE

By Peter Fournier

First, I want to thank you the members for being part of something rare and special; the membership of the APWU. With capitalism becoming more and more profound each day, in today's world, at least the APWU still has our backs. Fighting off Postal privatization, and the never-ending push to reduce our benefits, the Union is there for us. The Central Florida Local is no different. With weekly video updates from President Joe Paul, and a talented group of Officers, we are all very fortunate. Our local has a constant flow of fresh and useful information, as well as consistently securing excellent grievance resolves for our members. The CFAL 1462 Stewards are also stepping up and accepting the challenge of being an APWU representative, which is not easy sometimes.

Look no further than our last contract negotiation; finalized in March of this year. With continued wage increases, COLAs, and retroactive pay, the APWU took steps to protect our financial well-being. They also took steps to protect our mental well being by limiting damages inflicted by management concerning Excessing and Layoffs. Keep in mind that the retroactive pay is scheduled to be paid in Pay Period 18-202, with a pay date of September 4, 2020. This gives employees you plenty of time to decide if you would want to change your number of dependents for the pay period; to mitigate the big tax hit on that retroactive money. Everyone will have to assess their own tax situation and decide if it is the right move to make.

Moving forward, we must all take the necessary precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The APWU, nationally, has done an excellent job of responding to the virus and ensuring that the members are provided adequate protections against the virus spreading at postal facilities. Locally, Joe Paul, has and continues to stay on top of all COVID-19 news and has constantly supplied the membership with important updates. He has gone over and above what he should be doing to keep the members informed; including sacrificing countless hours of personal time to answer members questions and emails, speaking to Supervisors and Managers, and numerous weekly telecons concerning COVID-19, Function 1, and Excessing of people and machinery from our jurisdictional postal facilities. Being a Union representative is not always satisfying or glorious, and it is commendable for any person who accepts that roll.

In closing, I want to thank you for taking the time to read my article, and please take the Corona virus seriously. Do your part at home, at work, and in public settings to minimize catching or transmitting the virus. Be part of the solution; and not part of the problem!

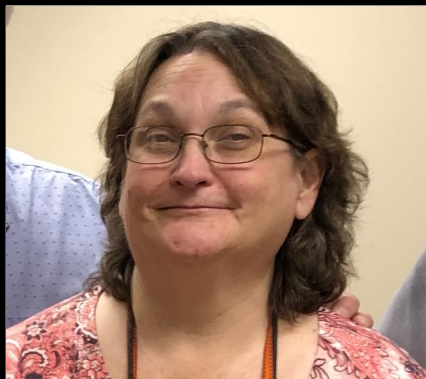
In Solidarity,

Peter Fournier

Secretary Treasurer
Central Florida Area Local



Hans Breemen, Peter Fournier, Ron Castillo



Clerk Craft Director Report

By: Wanda Wroten

I hope all of you are feeling well and safe during this COVID-19 Pandemic. By now every Union member should have received the new Collective Bargaining Agreement from the National that covers the time-period of September 21, 2018 thru September 20, 2021.

There is a 'U' and an 'I' in Union. It takes all of us to try to make sure that the contract is being followed by management, and to resolve any violations. Please take the time to read and have some knowledge of the certain articles that your work location may be experiencing. The most frequent issues are:

- **Article 8 - Hours of work:** Explains work hours, schedules and overtime, Sunday Premium, Night-Time Differential, Guarantees and other things.
- **Article 9- Salaries and wages:** Explains step increases and cost of living adjustments
- **Article 10 – Leave:** Choice vacation, Sick leave, and ELM references
- **Article 11- Holidays:** Lists all the holidays observed, holiday work and schedule, holiday eligibility and payment, holidays for PSE's.
- **Article 13 – Assignment of Ill or Injured Regular Workforce Employees:** Requesting light duty, temporary and permanent assignment
- **Article 14 – Safety and Health:** Responsibilities, cooperation, implementation, employee participation and Local Safety Committee meetings.
- **Article 15--Grievance and Arbitration Procedures:** Section 2.1 of this Article deals with the Step 1 process of talking with the immediate supervisor and the APWU Steward
- **Article 16 – Discipline Procedure:** Discussions, Letter of Warnings, Suspensions, Emergency procedures, Review of discipline, Veteran's Preference, and employee discipline records.
- **Article 25 Higher Level Assignments:** Definition, higher level pay, written orders, higher level details
- **Article 37 – Clerk Craft:** Definitions, seniority, posting, bidding and application, unencumbered employees, conversions
- **Memorandums of Understanding Appendix A:** Deals with PSE's and the articles that apply

Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU): Article 30. Our local agreement between union and management on things such as: Choice Vacations, Holiday signup and scheduling, overtime signup and rotation, incidental leave, and other issues.

At the **Seminole P&DC**, there has not been enough volume to run the FSS except for Sunday. So, when management determines a need to assign the Tour 3 and Tour 1 FSS Clerks outside their Principal Assignment Area, the employees are moved by juniority. Any employee not holding a bid duty assignment, within the principal assignment area, will be moved prior to moving any mail processing employee who holds a bid duty assignment, and this applies to light/limited duty employees not holding a bid as well. Our LMOU states there are two sections-Automation and Manual. Thus, management should place you in Automation pay locations if there are any PSE's assigned to the SPSS or AFSSM 100, then management needs to send the PSE's to a Manual operation rather than the FSS clerks. If there are no PSE's in Automation, and the FSS Clerks are all being assigned to a Manual operation, make sure you follow the instruction, but management should be utilizing the FSS Clerks for break and lunch relief on the Automation machines.

At the **Orlando P&DC**, we are still dealing with the one-man staffing, holiday scheduling issues, overtime rotation, and Lead Clerks not being utilized for their job duties while other Clerks are put into their place. If there are violations, please request to see your Steward, clock over to the right operation, and write up your statements in the Union booth. Please ensure this procedure is done and not trying to give a statement to the Steward on the workroom floor, otherwise it could lead to management claiming both employees are doing union business on the workroom floor without management's permission.

If you request to see your Steward and it doesn't occur that day, then the next day at the start of your shift you remind your supervisor of your request the day before, and ask what the status is. If management cannot release you right away, then management does have to set a time for you to meet with the Steward that same day. If that does not happen, then please contact the Union Hall at cfal1462@gmail.com with your name, where you work, begin tour time, and your phone number. You can also call the Union Hall 407-854 6396.

In Solidarity,

Wanda Wroten
Clerk Craft Director



BENEFITS OF UNION MEMBERSHIP

The APWU is affiliated with the AFL-CIO, a federation of 55 national unions with approximately 12 million active and retired members. There are many reasons to be a member of the APWU and our Central Florida Area Local. It is imperative that we must get our message out to non-members that **today** is the day to join our ranks as we strive to become stronger together. We are one of the few remaining long-standing unions, with over 200,000 members, and we need to continue that tradition into the future, and **OUR** futures depend on it. With our new current Collective Bargaining Agreement, we are seeing some of the largest pay increases, including our cost-of-living-adjustments (COLAs), that we have ever seen. There has never been a better time to inform our non-members what the APWU has done for all of us, to include but not limited to:

- **Wages**--Regular pay increases, COLAs, Sunday premium pay, night differential pay, and double time for excessive overtime.
- **Benefits**--A significant portion of premiums paid by USPS, basic life insurance fully paid by the USPS, ten paid holidays, generous sick leave, and vacation (annual) benefits.
- **Job Security**--Jobs awarded by seniority, training programs to upgrade skills and opportunities, and a negotiated **no lay-off clause**.
- **Excessing**--There can be no excessing outside of the 50-mile radius.
- **Representation**--Outstanding representation in contract negotiations, effective grievance procedure, and an active legislation program to fight for postal workers on Capitol Hill.
- **Union Democracy**--Direct elections of all union officers, membership ratification of contracts, opportunities to participate at all levels of the organization.

Member-Only Privileges - APWU MasterCard (with no annual fee, low balance transfer rate, and competitive interest rate), Union Plus discounts (college scholarships, mortgage program, entertainment and theme park discounts, car buying services, etc.), APWU Health Plan, Voluntary Benefits Plan, Accident Benefit Association, and APWU magazine.

The work and time our APWU negotiators put into this new Collective Bargaining Agreement is one of the main reasons why we were successful in our recent arbitration award securing a good contract. That is one of the reasons we need everyone to be a member of our APWU and Central Florida Area Local so that collectively, we can speak louder and have the power to defeat oncoming issues. Together **WE** can make a difference!

In Solidarity,



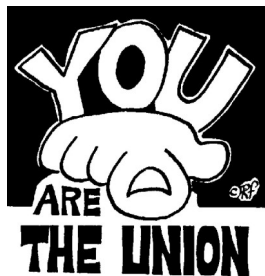
POSTAL CHATTER

CENTRAL FLORIDA AREA LOCAL

10501 S. Orange Ave, Suite 117
Orlando, Florida 32824

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage Paid
Permit No. 3165
Orlando, Florida

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Union Meetings are the 2nd Thursday
Of every month at 7pm. The
Union hall is located at 10501 S Orange Ave,
Suite 117, Orlando, FL 32824. Please mark your
calendars and attend. It is your Union.

Let your voice be heard!!!